



The President's Daily Brief

6 September 1969

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~~Top Secret~~ 50X1

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SOVIET UNION - COMMUNIST CHINA

[redacted] volunteered to a 50X1

US Embassy official on Thursday that the Russians intend to use "new weapons" against China if there is a further outbreak of border fighting. He made the assertion in a context which did not exclude the use of tactical nuclear weapons.

The [redacted], sought to make it clear that he 50X1 was revealing the thinking of "higher levels" in Moscow. He has given the embassy accurate information in the past in connection with the Sino-Soviet issue. On this occasion he said that if the Chinese persist, as Moscow thinks they will, in provoking armed clashes along the border, the Soviets will use "new weapons" to demonstrate that they do not intend to be "bled white."

These are not entirely new notes. The letter which Moscow sent [redacted] Communist Party also had 50X1 said that Moscow was determined not to be bled white by the Chinese. As for weapons, a Soviet diplomat had claimed last spring that the Soviets had shown the Chinese a "new weapon or two" during the second clash on the Ussuri River. He denied, at the same time, that he meant nuclear weapons and his reference then may have been to improved conventional munitions such as controlled fragmentation artillery rounds.

In this most recent episode, however, [redacted] passed 50X1 up the chance given him to rule out the use of nuclear weapons against the Chinese. He claimed that Moscow would let the Chinese "know" before using "new weapons"--thereby implying a

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nuclear threat. At the same time he disavowed press reports that Moscow was planning a pre-emptive strike against China, ascribing these to a US attempt to disturb further relations between Moscow and Peking.

Despite the ambiguities of [redacted] meaning, he came as close as any Soviet source has yet come to saying that Moscow is ready to escalate its military response to Chinese border provocations.

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Chou En-Lai has already left Hanoi for Peking, and Kosygin is not scheduled to arrive in the North Vietnamese capital until today. Wittingly or not, the two thus have managed to avoid the embarrassment of a graveside meeting.

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CZECHOSLOVAKIA - SOVIET UNION

The Czechoslovak party plenum scheduled to open on Thursday was postponed at the last minute, apparently as a result of disagreements between Husak and the party's conservatives. Meanwhile, [redacted] Prime Minister Cernik, one of the main targets of the conservatives, may survive the upcoming purges.

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Cernik has a reputation for turning up on the winning side in intramural Communist struggles. On 27 August, in what was

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widely regarded in Prague as an effort to save his own skin,
he made a sharp public castigation of Dubcek.

BRAZIL

There is mounting opposition in the Brazilian military to the government's decision to release 15 political prisoners in exchange for Ambassador Elbrick. A meeting of high-ranking officers and members of the ruling junta has been set for today to reconsider the question of the prisoners' release.

VIETNAM

Enemy military activity during the night of 4-5 September was typical of the "highpoint" tactics the Communists have used since early spring. Although 86 shellings were reported,

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mostly against military targets in III and IV corps, along with a few ground attacks northwest of Saigon, allied casualties and damage were light.

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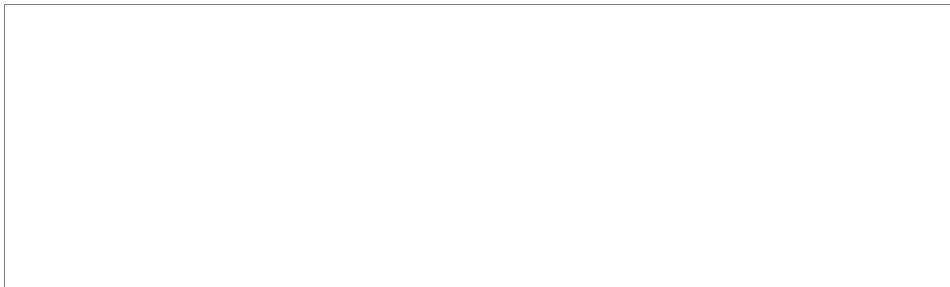
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